

Message Text

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71

ACTION EB-11

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 928

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SUBJECT: LOCAL PRESS COMMENT ON PANAM REQUEST TO CAB TO
SUSPEND SANTA MARIA SERVICE
REFERENCE: PONTA DELGADA 267

1. FIRST PUBLIC NEWS OF PANAM'S REQUEST TO CAB TO SUSPEND
BOSTON-SANTA MARIA-LISBON SERVICE FOR ONE YEAR BEGINNING
JANUARY 7, 1974, APPEARED AFTERNOON DECEMBER 17 IN DIARIO DOS
ACORES. ON DECEMBER 18, ALL THREE PONTA DELGADA PAPERS
(SANTA MARIA HAS NONE) CARRIED EDITORIALS LAMENTING THE ACTION.

2. " DIARIO DOS ACORES" EDITORIAL TITLED "LOVE SHOULD BE
REPAID WITH LOVE", CITES INESTIMABLE SERVICES PROVIDED BY PANAM
SINCE FIRST CLIPPER FLIGHTS TO HORTA (IN 1939) AND THAT IN
RETURN AZOREANS HAVE MADE ALL POSSIBLE USE OF THESE FLIGHTS,

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RESULTING IN SITUATION OF RECIPROCITY. SUSPENSION OF FLIGHTS
REPRESENTS FAILURE TO RECIPROCATATE ON PART OF PANAM, WHICH WILL
CAUSE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DAMAGES IN AZORES TOO OBVIOUS TO ENUMERATE.
THE ACTION COMES AT A TIME WHEN INCREASED TRANSPORTATION IS BEING
TALKED ABOUT AS THE PRINCIPAL POINT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM
IN THE AZORES. EDITORIAL ENDS WITH CALL TO ALL RESPONSIBLE SECTORS
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FOR RAPID ACTION TO PREVENT PANAM FROM SUSPENDING FLIGHTS.

3. " CORREIO DOS ACORES" EDITORIAL TITLED " AZOREAN AIR COMMUNICATIONS PUT IN CHECK BY PAN AMERICAN DECISION", RECOGNIZES LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF AIRLINE, BUT INDICATES THAT AZORES ALSO HAVE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS IN RETAINING FLIGHTS. PANAM RESPONSIBLE FOR MOVING 32.6 PER CENT OF 31,647 PASSANGERS WHO PASSED THROUGH SANTA MARIA AIRPORT IN 1971 AND 32.2 PER CENT OF 37,966 PASSANGER MOVEMENTS IN 1972. THESE PERHAPS NOT LARGE FIGURES COMPARED EVEN WITH SOME AIRPORT INVOLVED IN PANAM SUSPENSION REQUEST, BUT VERY IMPORTANT TO AZORES. PANAM WILL STILL RETAIN TWO FLIGHTS WEEKLY BOSTON-LISBON AND ONE WEEKLY NEW YORK LISBON, WITH RETURNS, WHICH IN EFFECT OVERFLY AZORES. WHY COULD AT LEAST ONE OF THESE FLIGHTS NOT STOP AT SANTA MARIA IN COMPENSATION FOR THE MANY SERVICES PROVIDED BY THAT AIRPORT IN THE PAST. PANAM DECISION AFFECTS PORTUGUESE POPULATIONS WHOSE RIGHTS THE

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PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT WILL KNOW HOW TO DEFEND, AS AIR SERVICES CANNOT BE LEFT ENTIRELY TO THE WILL OF THE COMPANIES WHICH PROVIDE THEM, WHICH ARE ALWAYS JEALOUS OF THEIR TRAFFIC RIGHTS, BUT FORGETFUL OF WHAT THEY OWE.

4. " ACORES" BRIEFLY REGRETTED DECISION AND PROMISED FURTHER EDITORIAL. "THE AZORES SERVED AS THE BASE FROM WHICH PANAM LAUNCHED ITS EUROPEAN SERVICES, AND NOW IS BEING ABANDONED ALMOST AS EASILY AS ONE DISPOSES OF A USED CIGARETTE. THIRTY-FOUR YEARS (THE TIME PANAM HAS FLOWN TO THE AZORES) HAVE REPRESENTED VERY LITTLE OR NOTHING."

5. IN MEANTIME , PANAM HAS CANCELLED DECEMBER 27 FLIGHT SANTA MARIA-BOSTON BECAUSE OF FUEL SHORTAGE, LEAVING ONLY TWO FLIGHTS BEFORE DATE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION
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